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this will form the only way out of the modern school-difficulty. It is true that such a change would revolutionize our school-life; but it will have to come, all the same, and no doubt will come *pari passu* with other changes that are taking place in society at large.

EDWARD CARPENTER.

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THE MISSION OF MUSIC.

"WE must have something light or comic." So say those who provide music for the people, and their words represent an opinion which is almost universal with regard to the popular taste. The uneducated, it is thought, must be unable to appreciate that which is refined or to enjoy that which does not make them laugh and be merry.

Opinions exist, especially with regard to the tastes and wants of the poor, by the side of facts altogether inconsistent with those opinions. There are facts within the knowledge of some who live in the East End of London which are sufficient, at any rate, to shake this general opinion as to the people's taste for music.

In Whitechapel, where so many philanthropists have tried "to patch with handfuls of coal and rice" the people's wants, the signs of ignorance are as evident as the signs of poverty. There is an almost complete absence of those influences which are hostile to the ignorance, not, indeed, of the mere elements of knowledge (the Board-schools are now happily everywhere prominent), but to the ignorance of joy, truth, and beauty. Utility and the pressure of work have crowded house upon house; have filled the shops with what is only cheap, driven away the distractions of various manners and various dresses, and made the place weary to the body and depressing to the mind.

Nevertheless, in this district a crowd has been found willing, on many a winter's night, to come and listen to parts of an

oratorio or to selections of classical music. The oratorios have sometimes been given in a church by various bodies of amateurs who have practised together for the purpose; the concerts have been given in school-rooms on Sunday evenings by professionals of reputation. To the oratorio men and women have come, some of them from the low haunts kept around the city by its carelessly administered charity, all of them of the class which, working for its daily bread, has no margin of time for study. Amid those who are generally so independent of restraint, who cough and move as they will, there has been a death-like stillness as they have listened to some fine solo of Handel's. On faces which are seldom free of the marks of care, except in the excitement of drink, a calm has seemed to settle and tears to flow, for no reason but because "it is so beautiful!" Sometimes the music has appeared to gradually break down barriers that shut out some poor fellow from a fairer past or a better future than his present: the oppressive weight of the daily care lifts, other sights are in his vision, and at last, covering his face or sinking on his knees, he makes prayers which cannot be uttered. Sometimes it has seemed to seize one on business bent, to suddenly transport him to another world, and, not knowing what he feels, has forced him to say, "It was good to be there." A church filled with hundreds of East Londoners, affected, doubtless, in different ways, but all silent, reverent, and self-forgetful, is a sight not to be forgotten or to be held to have no meaning. To the concerts have crowded hard-headed, unimaginative men, described in a local paper as being "friends of Bradlaugh." These have listened to and evidently taken in difficult movements of Beethoven, Schumann, and Chopin. The loud applause which has followed some moments of strained, rapt attention has proclaimed the universal feeling.

With a knowledge of the character of the music, the applications for admission have increased, and the announcement of a hope that the concerts might be continued the following winter, and possibly also extended to weekday evenings, has brought from some of those present an expression of their desire for other high-class music. The poor quarters of cities

have been too long treated as if their inhabitants were deficient in that which is noblest in human nature. Human beings want not something which will do, but the best.

If it be asked what proof there be that such music has a permanent effect on the hearers, the only answer is that people do not always know how they have been most influenced. It is the air unconsciously breathed which affects the cure much more often than the medicine so consciously taken. Music may most deeply and permanently affect those who themselves can express no appreciation with their words or show results in their lives. Like the thousand things which surround the child and which he never notices, music may largely serve in the formation of character and the satisfaction of life. That the performance of this music in the East End is not followed by expressions of intelligent appreciation or by immediate change of life is no proof of its failure to influence. The fact that crowds come to listen is sufficient to make the world reconsider its opinion that the people care only for what is light or laugh-compelling. There is evidently in the highest music something which finds a response in many minds not educated to understand its mysteries nor interested in its creation. This suggests that music has in the present time a peculiar mission.

"Man cannot live by bread alone," expresses a truth which even those will allow who profess themselves careless about present-day religion. There is in human beings, in those whom the rich think to satisfy by increased wages and improved dwellings, a need of something beyond. The man who has won an honorable place, who by punctuality, honesty, and truthfulness has become the trusted servant of his employer, is often weary with the very monotony of his successful life. He has bread in abundance, but, unsatisfied, he dreams of filling quite another place in the world, perhaps as the leader daring much for others, perhaps as the patriot suffering much for his class and country, or perhaps as the poet living in others' thoughts. There flits before him a vision of a fuller life, and the vision stirs in him a longing to share such life. The woman, too, who in common talk is the model wife

and mother, whose days are filled with work, whose talk is of her children's wants, whose life seems so even and uneventful, so complete in its very prosaicness, she, if she could be got to speak out the thoughts which flit through her brain as she silently plies her needle or goes about her household duties, would tell of strange longings for quite another sort of life, of passions and aspirations which have been scarcely allowed to take form in her mind. There is no one to whom "omens that would astonish have not predicted a future and uncovered a past."

Beyond the margin of material life is a spiritual life. This life has been and may still be believed to be the domain of religion, that which science has not known and can never know, which material things have not helped and can never help. It has been the glory of religion to develop the longing to be something higher and nobler by revealing to men the God who is higher than themselves.

Religion having abdicated this domain to invade that of science has to-day suffered by becoming the slave of æsthetic and moral precepts. Her professors often yield themselves to the influence of form and color or boast only of their morality and philanthropy.

It is no wonder, therefore, that many who are in earnest and feel that neither ritualism nor philanthropy have special power to satisfy their natures, reject religion. But they will not, if they are fair to themselves, object to the strengthening of that power which they must allow to have been a source of noble endeavor and of the very science whose reign they acknowledge. The sense of something better than their best, making itself felt not in outward circumstance but inwardly in their hearts, has often been the spring of effort and of hope. It is because the forms of present-day religion give so little help to strengthen this sense that so many now speak slightly of religion and profess their independence of its forms. Religion, in fact, is suffering for want of expression.

In other times men felt that the words of the prayer-book and phrases now labelled "theological" did speak out, or at any rate did give some form to their vague, indistinct longing

to be something else and something more; while the picture of God drawn from the Bible history and Bible words gave an object to their longing, making them desire to be like Him and to enjoy Him forever.

In these days, however, historical criticism and scientific discoveries have made the old expressions seem inadequate to state man's longings or to picture God's character. The words of prayers, whether the written prayers of the English Church or that rearrangement of old expressions called "extempore prayer," do not at once fit in with the longings of those to whom in these later days sacrifice has taken other forms and life other possibilities. The descriptions of God, involving so much that is only marvellous, jar against minds which have had hints of the grandeur of law and which have been awed not by miracles but by holiness. The petitions for the joys of heaven do not always meet the needs of those who have learnt that what they are is of more consequence than what they have, and the anthropomorphic descriptions of the character of God make Him seem less than many men who are not jealous, nor angry, nor revengeful.

Words and thoughts alike often fail to satisfy modern wants. While prayers are being said, the listless attitude and wandering gaze of those in whose souls are the deepest needs and loftiest aspirations, proclaim the failure. Religion has not failed, but only its power of expressing itself. There lives still in man that which gropes after God, but it can find no form in which to clothe itself. The loss is no light one. Expression is necessary to active life, and without it, at any rate, some of the greater feelings of human nature must suffer loss of energy and be isolated in individuals. Free exercise will give those feelings strength; the power of utterance will teach men that they are not alone when they are their best selves.

The world has been moved to many a crusade by a picture of suffering humanity, and the darkness of heathenism calls forth missionaries of one church and another. Almost as moving a picture might be drawn of those who wanting much can express nothing. Here are men and women, bone of our

bone, flesh of our flesh: they have that within them which raises them above all created things, powers by which they are allied to all whom the world honors, faculties by which they might find unfailing joy. But they have no form of expression and so they live a lower life, walking by sight, not by faith, giving rein to powers which find their satisfaction near at hand and developing faculties in the use of which there is more of pain than joy. The power which has been the spring of so much that is helpful to the world seems to be dead in them; that sense which has enabled men to stand together as brothers, trusting one another as common possessors of a divine spark, seems to be without existence. A few may go on walking grimly the path of duty, but for the mass of mankind life has lost its brightness. Dulness unrelieved by wealth and loneliness undispersed by dissipation are the common lot. In a sense more terrible than ever, men are like children walking in the night with no language but a cry. He that will give them the means once more to express what they really are and what they really want will break the bondage.

The fact that the music of the great masters does stir something in most men's natures should be a reason for trying whether music might not, at any rate partially, express the religious life of the present day.

There is much to be said in favor of such an experiment. On the one side there is the failure of existing modes of expression. The prettinesses of ritualism and the social efforts of Broad Churchism, even for the comparatively small numbers who adopt these forms of worship, do not meet those longings of the inner life which go beyond the love of beauty and beyond the love of neighbors. The vast majority of the people belong to neither ritualism nor Broad Churchism; they live, at best, smothering their aspirations in activity; at worst, in dissipation, having forsaken duty as well as God. Their morality has followed their religion. In the East End of London this is more manifest, not because the people of the East are worse than the people of the West, but because the people of the East have no call to seem other than they are. Amid many signs hopeful for the future there is also

among East Londoners, unblushingly declared at every street-corner, the self-indulgence which robs the young and weak of that which is their right, education and protection; the vice which saps a nation's strength is boasted of in the shop and flaunted in the highways, and the selfishness which is death to a man is often the professed ground of action.

Morality for the mass of men has been dependent on the consciousness of God, and with the lack of means of expression the consciousness of God seems to have ceased. On this ground alone there would be reason for making an experiment with music, if only because it offers itself as a possible means of that expression which the consciousness of God supports. And, on the other side, there is the natural fitness of music for the purpose.

In the first place, the great musical compositions may be asserted to be, not arrangements which are the results of study and the application of scientific principles, but the results of inspiration. The master, raised by his genius above the level of common humanity to think fully what others think only in part and to see face to face what others see only darkly, puts into music the thoughts which no words can utter and the description which no tongue can tell. What he himself would be, his hopes, his fears, his aspirations, what he himself sees of that holiest and fairest which has haunted his life, he tells by his art. Like the prophets, having had a vision of God, his music proclaims what he himself would desire to be, and expresses the emotions of his higher nature.

If this be a correct account of the meaning of those great master-pieces which may every day be performed in the ears of the people, it is easy to see how they may be made to serve the purpose in view. The greatest master is a man with much in him akin to the lowest of the human race. The homage all pay to the great is but the assertion of this kinship, the assertion of men's claim to be like the great when the obstructions of their mal-formation and mal-education shall be trained away. Men generally will, therefore, find in that which expresses the thoughts of the greatest the means of expressing their own thoughts. The music which enfolds

the passions that have never found utterance, that have never been realized by the ordinary man, will somehow appeal to him and make him recognize his true self and his true object. Music being itself the expression of the wants of man, all who share in man's nature will find in it an expression for longings and visions for which no words are adequate. It will be what prayers and meditations now so often fail to be, a means of linking men with the source of the highest thoughts and efforts, and of enabling them to enjoy God, a joy which so few now understand.

More than this, the best existing expression of that which men have found to be good has been by parables, whose meanings have not been limited to time or place but are of universal application. Heard by different people and at different times, parables have given to all alike a conception of that which eye cannot see nor voice utter; each hearer in each age has gained possibly a different conception, but in the use of the same words all have felt themselves to be united. The parable of the prodigal son has represented the God who has been won to love by the sacrifice of Christ and also the God who freely forgives. Such forms of expression it is most important to have in an age when movement is so rapid that things become old as soon as they are new, separating to-morrow those who have stood together to-day, and when at the same time the longing for unity is so powerful that the thought of it acts as a charm on men's minds.

In some degree all art is a parable, as it makes known in a figure that which is unknown, revealing the truth the artist has felt to others just in so far as they by education and surroundings have been qualified to understand it. Titian's picture of the Assumption helped the mediæval saint to worship better the Virgin Mother, and also helps those of our day to realize the true glory of womanhood.

But music, even more than painting and poetry, fulfils this condition. It reveals that which the artist has seen, and reveals it with no distracting circumstance of subject, necessary to the picture or the poem. The hearer who listens to a great composition is not drawn aside to think of some histori-

cal or romantic incident; he is free to think of that of which such incidents are but the clothes. Age succeeds to age; the music which sounded in the ears of the fathers sounds also in the ears of the children. Place and circumstance force men asunder, but still for those of every party or sect and for those in every quarter of the world the great works of the masters of music remain. The works may be performed in the West End or in the East End,—the hearers will have different conceptions, will see from different points of view the vision which inspired the master, but will nevertheless have the sense that the music which serves all alike creates a bond of union.

Music then would seem fitted to be in this age the expression of that which men in their inmost hearts most reverence. Creeds have ceased to express this and have become symbols of division rather than of unity! Music is a parable, telling in sounds which will not change of that which is worthy of worship, telling it to each hearer just in so far as he by nature and circumstance is able to understand it, but giving to all that feeling of common life and assurance of sympathy which has in old times been the strength of the church. By music, men may be helped to find God who is not far from any one of us, and be brought again within reach of that tangible sympathy, the sympathy of their fellow-creatures.

There is, however, still one other requisite in a perfect form of religious expression. The age is new and thoughts are new, but nevertheless they are rooted in the past. More than any one acknowledges is he under the dominion of the buried ages. He who boasts himself superior to the superstitions of the present is the child of parents whose high thoughts, now transmitted to their child, were intertwined with those superstitions. Any form of expression therefore which aims at covering emotions said to be new must, like these emotions, have associations with the past! A brand new form of worship agreeable to the most enlightened reason and surrounded with that which the present asserts to be good would utterly fail to express thoughts and feelings, which, if born of the present, share the nature of parents who lived in the past. It is interesting to notice how

machines and institutions which are the product of the latest thought bear in their form traces of that which they have superseded; the railway carriage suggests the stage-coach, and the House of Commons reminds us of the Saxon Witanagemot. The absolutely new would have no place in this old world, and a new form of expression could not express the emotions of the inner life.

Music which offers a form in which to clothe the yearnings of the present has been associated with the corresponding yearnings of the past, and would seem therefore to fulfil the necessary condition. Those who to-day feel music telling out their deepest wants and proclaiming their praise of the good and holy, might recognize in the music echoes of the songs which broke from the lips of Miriam and David, of Ambrose and Gregory, and of those simple peasants who one hundred years ago were stirred to life on the moors of Cornwall and Wales.

The fact that music has been thus associated with religious life gives it an immense, if an unrecognized power. The timid are encouraged and the bold are softened! When the congregation is gathered together and the sounds rise which are full of that which is and perhaps always will be "ineffable," there float in, also, memories of other sounds, poor perhaps and uncouth, in which simple people have expressed their prayers and praises; the atmosphere, as it were, becomes religious, and all feel that the music is not only beautiful, but the means of bringing them nearer to the God after whom they have sought so long and often despaired to find.

For these reasons music seems to have a natural fitness for becoming the expression of the inner life. The experiment, at any rate, may be easily tried. There is in every parish a church with an organ, and arrangements suitable for the performance of grand oratorios; there are concert halls or school-rooms suitable for the performance of classical music. There are many individuals and societies with voices and instruments capable of rendering the music of the masters. Most of them have, we cannot doubt, the enthusiasm which would

induce them to give their services to meet the needs of their fellow-creatures.

Money has been and is freely subscribed for the support of missions seeking to meet bodily and spiritual wants; music will as surely be given by those who have felt its power to meet that need of expression which so far keeps the people without the consciousness of God. Members of ethical societies, who have taught themselves to fix their eyes on moral results, may unite with members of churches who care also for religious things. Certain it is that people who are able to realize grand ideals will be likely in their own lives to do grand things, and doing them make the world better and themselves happier.

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DISCUSSION.

CHARACTER AND CIRCUMSTANCE.

SOME time ago at a *Symposium* of the Aristotelian Society in which I took part the question was discussed, whether Character and Circumstance are Co-ordinate Factors in human life, or whether either is subordinate to the other? My thoughts have often recurred to the subject since, with a conviction that the question is less simple, or, at any rate, less easy to answer briefly than it perhaps looks at first. There can be little doubt that we all acknowledge in action, though not always in express reflection, on the one hand the effect of Circumstance on Character, and on the other sometimes the triumph of Character over Circumstance, sometimes the failure of Circumstance to correct, mould, or sustain Character.

For all who are interested in the education or guardianship of the young, in the question of improving the condition of certain classes of the community, or again in the improvement of other individuals, or even of themselves, must have felt the enormous importance of circumstances, the influence on the future of children of the circumstances of their home and school life; the often incalculable effect on the young of their surroundings, of their companions, teachers, employers, of the economic, material, and social conditions under which they live; the way in which certain